

REMARKS

Claims 46-51 are pending. The present amendment cancels claims 4-9 and adds new claims 47-51. Claim 46 stand withdrawn from further consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. Applicants affirm the election of claims 4-9. New claims 47-51 read on the elected invention.

Claims 4, 5, 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Given et al. The Examiner comments that Given et al. provides a spring-like tubular or cylindrical structure with spiral faces at opposite ends where it is closely wound.

Claim 6 was rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Given et al. in view of Van Ooy. Van Ooy is applied by the Examiner for disclosure of a spring wound on a wire.

Claim 9 was rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Given et al. in view of Ferreira et al. Ferreira et al. is applied by the Examiner for disclosure of stainless steel.

New claims 47-51 have been added employing means-plus-function language in order to invoke 35 USC §112, sixth paragraph. 35 USC §112, sixth paragraph, requires a prior art element to perform the claimed function. That is, unless an element performs the identical function specified in the claim, it can not be an equivalent for the purposes of 35 USC §112, sixth paragraph.

The new claims set forth a means for holding a work during a surface treatment (corresponding to wire 11 coiled with clearances) and a means for preventing entanglement with another surface treating holder 12a. Support is provided in the specification at, for example, from page 22, line 11 through page 23, line 16).

The cited references fails to teach or suggest the means-plus-function elements set forth in new claims 47-51.

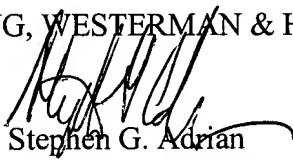
For at least the foregoing reasons, the claimed invention distinguishes over the cited art and defines patentable subject matter. Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action by Applicants would be desirable to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone Applicants' undersigned attorney.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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